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By CAPT. GEO. GRANVILLE, U. S. A.



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SUMTER'S AIDE:

A Story of the American Revolution.

By CAPT. GEO. GRANVILLE, U. S. A.,

Author of "Yankee Jack," "The Bravest of the Brave," "Fighting Jack," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO YOUTHFUL PATRIOTS.

ON a bright sunny afternoon in the fall of the year 1781, a youth, of some twenty years of age, was sitting on a log by the roadside, within a mile of the Santee river, South Carolina.

His garb was that of the ordinary resident. On his head he wore a coonskin cap with the usual coontail appendage. Across his knee lay an old-fashioned squirrel rifle, which he seemed to regard with real affection, examining it carefully, and picking the flint as if to make sure that there could be no failure when a shot was desired.

As the reader doubtless knows, that part of the country at that time, was completely overrun by marauding bands of British and Tories. Such was the bitterness of feeling existing between the adherents of the King and the patriots, that no man dared venture forth from his house or place of concealment, without being armed to the teeth.

The hatred and animosities of the partisan warfare had culminated in a war of extermination almost. The patriots and Tories showed but little mercy to each other, whereas between the British and the patriots, the rules of civilized warfare were, in a measure, observed.

The youth was evidently not a hunter, for as he sat there listlessly on the log, a couple of deer passed within easy range of his rifle, and he might with ease have brought one of them down. A flock of turkeys ran across the road within a stone's throw of him, and a flock of quail flew over him, while over his head a couple of squirrels chased each other up and down the trunk of a tree.

No, he was not hunting, he was there for another purpose.

"I wonder what keeps Sam so late," he muttered, looking up at the sun. "He should have been here an hour ago. If the Tories have stopped him, it will give me hard work to do the job myself. It's dangerous work, I know, but I am bound to do it, and Sumter shall have the secret, if it costs me my life to get it to him."

At that moment the sound of a horse's feet along the road coming from the river smote upon his ears. He straightened himself up instantly and assumed a listening attitude.

The sound became more distinct as it drew near.

"That's not Sam," he said. "He has no horse. I wonder who it can be. It's only one horse, so I'll stand my ground and see who the rider is."

He resumed his seat on the log, and assumed that listless air that gave one the impression that he was an inordinately lazy youth. He even took out his pocket-knife and pretended to be whittling on the log as the solitary horseman hove in sight.

"Hallo," said the horseman, suddenly checking his steed in the middle of the road. "Who are you?"

"Hallo!" responded the youth. "Who are you?"

The horseman eyed him quizzically, thrusting his hand in his pistol holster as if to draw a weapon.

The youth quickly covered him with his rifle, remarking, as he did so:

"If there's any shooting to be done, I reckon I'll have the first shot."

"Suppose we don't have any shooting, then?" suggested the horseman.

"I wouldn't, if I were you," replied the youth, "but you had better take your hand out of that holster."

"Yes—yes!" said the horseman, quickly withdrawing his hand. "Who are you, anyway?"

"Well, who are you?"

"I'm Jones," was the reply.

"Well, I'm Smith," returned the youth, at which the horseman chuckled good-naturedly, and said:

"Well, my friend, we ought to get better acquainted, and not be dodging each other in this way."

"I don't want any acquaintances," said the youth. "Have got too many of them now. Don't want any more. If you have any business to attend to you had better go about it, and leave me to attend to mine. If we knew each other, mebbe we wouldn't be friends. There are a great many people, nowadays, who are safest when nobody knows anything about them."

Again the horseman laughed.

"There's a great deal of truth in what you say, my young friend, but I'm inclined to think that on closer acquaintance we would be good friends. I believe you and I are on the same side."

"Mebbe we are, and mebbe we ain't," was the reply. "You're a stranger to me, as I am to you. You'd better go about your business, and leave me to mine. Mebbe we'll meet some other time."

"But look here, my young friend," said the horseman, "I'd like to——"

"Ride on, sir!" said the youth, interrupting him, bringing his rifle to his shoulder, "or I'll make a hole right through you!"

The determined tone, flashing eyes, and intense earnestness of the youth, quickly convinced the horseman that he was not to be trifled with.

Without uttering a word, the horseman spurred his horse forward, and resumed his journey.

The youth stepped out in the middle of the road, and gazed after the horseman till he disappeared from sight, a quarter of a mile away, then he returned to the log and sat down again, muttering to himself:

"Mebbe he was a Whig, and mebbe he wasn't. If he is, it is all right; if he isn't, the further he is away from me the safer it will be for him. What in creation can be the matter with him?"

"There's nothing the matter with him," said a voice immediately behind him.

The youth sprang to his feet as if stung by a hornet.

"Holy Moses, Sam!" he exclaimed. "What a scare you gave me! What in thunder kept you so long?"

Sam extended his hand and said:

"I had to do some tall running, Harry, and go through two miles of swamp, to get away from three Tories and a nigger."

"The thunder you did!" exclaimed Harry. "How do you know they were Tories?"

Sam took off his coon-skin cap, and thrust his finger through a corner of it, saying:

"Don't that look like a tory's work?"

"Well, I should say it did. They are getting as thick as blackberries around here. They think they've got this district so well guarded that Sumter or Marion can't get any news from it, but we'll find Sumter before sunrise tomorrow, or my name isn't Harry Hinton."

"Well, come, we must be off," said Sam. "We must cross the river before dark, or we may have to swim it."

The two youths started off together, with strides that carried them over a great deal of ground in a given number of minutes.

Harry Hinton and Sam Strong were about the same size and age, young, active, and athletic, full of the fire of youth, and ardent patriots. They had been children and schoolmates together, and among a large circle of relatives in that section of the State, were the only ones to espouse the desperate cause of the patriots. On several occasions they had been ill-treated by their tory relatives, and now they had resolved to make their escape and join the forces of Sumter, and, if possible, induce "the Game Cock" to make a sweep through the district with his brave followers.

Reaching the river, they proceeded to ford it. At that point the river was very wide and shallow, being not over two feet deep.

Just as they reached the opposite bank, a couple of men sprang out of the bushes and confronted them.

"Where are you and Sam going, Harry Hinton?" one of the men asked.

Harry was surprised for the moment. He knew both of the men. They were neighbors of his father, and rank kingmen.

"We are going hunting," replied Harry.

"Hunting what?"

"Deer."

"Why cross the river after deer? There's plenty on the other side."

"We are after three fine bucks that swam across a mile below," said Harry.

"I reckon you'd better go back, boys," said the man, shaking his head, as though doubting the story about the three bucks.

"What right have you to order us about, Mr. Clarke?" Harry demanded, bristling up.

"We are guarding this ford," replied Clarke, "to prevent any rebels crossing it. Turn and go back, now, or it will be the worse for you."

"I won't do it," was the emphatic response.

"You won't?"

"No," came from both of them.

Clarke and his companion were astonished. They both handled their rifles as though to frighten the youths into obeying their orders, and were themselves frightened nearly out of their wits on finding themselves covered by Harry's and Sam's weapons.

"Don't shoot!" gasped Clarke.

"Oh, Lord!" ejaculated his companion.

"I don't want to shoot you, Mr. Clarke," said Harry, "but if you don't drop your rifle and wade across to the other side, I'll make a hole right through you."

"I'll go," Clarke tremblingly replied.

"Drop your rifle."

Both men dropped their weapons and started into the water.

"If you look back, we'll drop you," said Sam, "so you'd better not fool with us."

Harry and Sam covered the two Tories with their rifles till they were across the stream. Then Harry picked up the two rifles the Tories had left, and quickly threw them in the river.

"Now, come," he said to Sam, "let's be off. They won't dare to look back till they reach the other side. By that time we can be a quarter of a mile away."

They both dodged into the bushes and made good speed for nearly an hour, by which time they were three or four miles from the river.

Being perfectly familiar with all the roads in that part of the country, they did not need to make inquiries as to their destination. About five miles beyond the river they struck another road, which ran parallel with the stream. Turning into that they pushed southward with rapid strides.

"Sumter is somewhere in the swamps of the Santee," said Harry, "and we'll keep on till some of his scouts stop us. Then they'll take us to the camp, and that's what we want."

"But suppose some Tory scouts should stop us," suggested Sam.

"Well, I reckon there ain't many Tory scouts down this way."

"I don't know about that," returned Sam. "The pesky varmints seem to be everywhere."

"Well," said Harry, "if they do stop us, somebody'll get hurt, for no Tory shall ever take Harry Hinton alive."

"That's me, Harry, here's my hand on that. I've always thought I'd hate to kill a man, but I wish I may be roasted if I wouldn't kill forty Tories before I'd let one of them take me."

The two youths grasped each other's hands in silent compact and then pressed onward.

The sun had just sunk behind the trees as they were pushing along the road, when a strong voice called to them.

"Halt!"

They promptly came to a standstill, and two men came out of the bushes on the roadside and approached them.

"Where are you boys going?" one of the men asked.

"Where are *you* going?" Harry returned.

"By the king's beard!" exclaimed one of the strangers. "He must be an impudent young rebel."

"Are you kingmen?" Harry demanded.

"Of course we are," was the reply. "Are you rebels?"

"Yes," responded Harry and Sam in a breath, and the next moment their rifles covered the Tories.

The astounded kingmen made a movement as if to fire, but the two brave youths, having the drop on them, pulled triggers. Two keen, whip-like cracks broke the stillness, and the two Tories threw up their hands and fell dead in the middle of the road.

CHAPTER II.

"THE BLACK LIST"—HARRY HUNTER'S GOOD FORTUNE—SUMTER'S AIDE.

WORDS fail in any attempt to describe the feelings of Harry and Sam, as they gazed at the two gasping victims on the ground.

They had never before drawn bead on a human being, and now each had killed his man. Each shot was terribly fatal, the victims dying almost instantly.

"Holy Moses, Sam!" exclaimed Harry. "We've killed them!"

"Yes," gasped Sam. "They are dead!"

"They were Tories," remarked Harry.

"They would have killed us," observed Sam.

"Of course they would. I'm not sorry. I wish all the Tories were dead."

"So do I. But what shall we do with them?"

"We'd better drag them into the bushes, and leave them there," said Harry.

"Well, let's do it."

They both seized hold of the dead men, and dragged them from the middle of the road into the bushes.

"Hadn't we better see what they have got in their pockets?" suggested Sam.

For answer Harry knelt by the side of one of the dead Tories, and thrust his hand into his pockets, where he found several pieces of British gold, together with a sheet of paper, folded closely together.

"Hallo!" he said, "what's this?"

"Open it and see," Sam suggested.

Harry did so and found a page of closely-written matter. Glancing hurriedly over the written sheet, Harry's face turned pale.

"Great God, Sam!" he exclaimed, "we did a good thing when we killed those two rascals."

"What is it?" Sam asked, rising to his feet and stepping over the dead body whose pockets he had been rifling.

"Here is a black list of the names of all the patriots in our district. Their houses are to be burned, the men killed, and the families driven out."

Sam gave a low whistle expressive of his astonishment.

"There's going to be some hot work up there," he said.

"Here's another list," exclaimed Harry, still intently scanning the paper, "containing the names of all the king's men in the district. They've got all of our neighbors down here, except two or three, who are classed among the patriots."

"Harry, you'd better give that paper to Sumter."

"I will; did you find any on your man?"

"No, nothing but a few shillings."

The two youths then concluded to hasten on towards the swamps of the Santee, as twilight was fast coming on.

Accordingly they reloaded their rifles and helped themselves to such ammunition as they found on the two dead Tories.

"Let's take their guns, too," suggested Sam.

"What for?"

"We might need them."

"Well, all right."

And they each picked up a rifle, and then emerged into the road again; as if anxious to get away from the scene of the tragedy as quickly as possible, the two youths hastened forward at an exceedingly brisk walk.

The stars came out, and the somber shadows of night settled darkly over the land. Still they pressed onward, making no halt till they reached a spring nine miles from the scene of the tragedy. They stopped there just long enough to quench their thirst, after which they resumed their tramp.

About midnight, as they were trudging along the road, they heard a signal in the woods on their right which, a moment later, was answered from the woods on their left.

Though they had never played soldier, Sam and Harry were very good woodsmen, and were well versed in the practice of signals so common among hunters.

"Did you hear that, Harry?" whispered Sam.

Harry instantly came to a halt.

"It's a signal," he said, in a low tone of voice, "and we must be careful or we will be shot. We'd better get into the bushes."

They both glided into the thicket by the roadside, and stood stock still, back to back, and listened.

The signals were repeated all around them.

Harry saw several dark forms run rapidly across the road.

"Sam," he whispered, "they are closing in on us, but I believe they are Whigs."

"You do?"

"Yes. I've heard Bird, Marion's old scout, speak of the whippoorwill signal that they used in the swamps, and I've a mind to use it now."

"Well, do so, and see what effect it will have."

The conversation was in rapid whispers, as the two youths knew that others were within a few paces of them in the woods.

Harry deliberately gave utterance to the clear notes of the whippoorwill, and, to his astonishment, it was promptly answered by another within ten feet of him. Then a voice spoke.

"Who are you?"

"Who are *you*?" Harry asked.

"I am a patriot. My name is Bird."

"Holy Moses!" exclaimed Harry. "Is that you?"

"Yes, it's me," was the reply; "but who are *you*?"

"I'm Harry Hinton from over the river."

"Good gracious, Harry!" exclaimed the old scout, coming forward from amid the bushes; "what brings you down here?" and the old scout reached out and caught him by the hand, shaking it warmly.

"I have come down to see General Sumter," replied Harry.

"Alone?"

"No, a friend came with me—Sam Strong."

"Oh, yes," said Bird; "I know his father. How are you, Sam?"

Sam shook hands with him, and Bird turned to Harry and asked:

"Is there any news up your way?"

"Plenty of it," was the reply. "I want to see the general right away."

"Anything serious?" Bird asked.

"Yes; there's going to be trouble up there!"

"Come on, then. I'll take you to the General. Follow me."

Bird led off through the woods, with Harry and Sam following close to his heels. They kept up close to him, and after going about half a mile, struck the edge of a great swamp. Bird exchanged signals with some one way out in the swamp, to give notice that he was coming, after which he plunged boldly in, followed by our two young heroes.

After floundering about for nearly a half-hour in the most intense darkness, Harry and Sam found themselves once more on solid ground. They had struck an island in the midst of the swamp, on which were a number of camp-fires and a few rude tents.

"Come on," said Bird; "we'll go to the General's quarters."

A glance around told our heroes that they were in one of the many rendezvous of the famous "Game Cock."

Around the camp-fires they saw many ill-clad, poorly armed, but determined-looking men. Near one of the larger fires was a rude shelter, built of boughs cut from a tree.

This was the headquarters of "the Game Cock," the famous Sumter.

There were several men standing around the fire, whilst three were sitting on a log in front of the shelter.

"General," said Bird, saluting one of the men sitting on the log, a tall, gaunt, angular-looking man, with an eye like an eagle's, "here are two young men from up the river on the other side. They asked me to bring them to you. I know them well; they are all right."

The man looked at Harry, and an expression of surprise swept over his face.

Harry returned his gaze, and involuntarily ejaculated:

"Holy Moses!"

"We have met before, young man," said the General, smiling.

"Yes, sir, but I'll be hanged if I thought it was you," replied Harry.

"No," said the General. "You didn't evince any desire to find out who I was. You seemed to have other business on hand."

"Yes, sir, I had. I was waiting for my friend here to join me in an attempt to get away and come to you."

"Oh! that was your business, was it?"

"Yes, sir, that, and nothing more."

"Well, young man," said the General, "you displayed the coolness, good judgment, and courage of an old veteran. You were too much for me," and he laughed as he extended his hand to Harry, who grasped and shook it warmly.

"Thank you, General," was the blushing reply. "I didn't know but what you might be a king's man, and I didn't want any trouble with any one just at that time."

"Have you any news from your district up there?" the General asked.

"Yes, sir, I have," was the reply, "and bad news," and he looked around at the listeners about the camp-fire.

The General promptly saw that the youth had something important to communicate, and accordingly motioned to his officers to retire.

When they were alone together the General turned to Harry, and asked:

"What is it?"

"It is this," said Harry, "all the Kingsmen up our way have banded together to murder all the Patriots, and drive their families over the river. They are guarding all the roads, and waiting for re-enforcements from their friends from Pedee. They aim to strike the blow next week, and they're going to assemble at Ison's mill on next Thursday night, and before daylight on Friday, they will commence their work of destruction and death."

Sumter looked sharply at the young man and asked:

"How did you find out all this, young man?"

"The daughter of one of the Tories told me, sir."

"Ah!" and the General gave him a searching glance, "are you sure you have not been deceived?"

"Yes, sir, my friend here, learned the same thing through another source."

"That is good proof," said the General.

"Then look at this, sir," said Harry, handing him the sheet of paper he had taken from the pockets of the dead Tory.

The General snatched the paper from his hand, and quickly turned himself so the light of the camp-fire could fall upon it. He glanced over it rapidly, his swarthy face assuming an almost savage expression. He caught the full purport of it, and when he had finished reading it, he turned it over and looked at the back of it.

"Where did you get this, young man?" he asked.

"There is blood on this paper."

"General, I killed the man on whom I found that paper. They halted us about sunset, two of them, and tried to stop us. We got in the first shots and stopped them. We found that paper in the pocket of one of them."

"What is your name, young man?" the general asked.

"My name is Harry Hinton, sir, and this is Sam Strong, a friend who came with me."

"Well," said the general, "do you know you have done the country more service in this day's work than my whole force have done in a month? This paper confirms all you have said. You have acted with rare judgment, and shown great courage, both of you. Do you want to join my force?"

"Yes, sir," they both answered, eagerly.

"You are just the man I want, Mr. Hinton. You know every name on this list, do you not?"

"Yes, sir, I think I do."

"So I thought. You know where they all live, do you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the nearest route to each one's house?"

"Yes, sir."

"And all the roads in the district?"

"All of them, sir."

The General looked around, and signaled for his orderly to approach him. The orderly came forward promptly.

"Tell Mr. Bird to come here," he said to him.

The orderly quickly disappeared on his errand. Five minutes later the old scout came up and saluted the General.

"Bird," said the General, "do you know this young man?" pointing to Harry.

"Yes, General, I do."

"Do you know him to be a good patriot?"

"As good as you or I, General."

"That's enough," said the General; and then, turning to Harry, added:

"I've some hot work for you, Captain Hinton."

"Captain!" exclaimed Harry, staring at the General.

"Yes, Captain," repeated the General. "I am forced to go in another direction next week, hence I must leave the management of your section in other hands. You know the circumstances, the people, and the roads, and all the plans of the Tories. You have shown good judgment and tact, very rare in one of your age; therefore I think I can safely trust it to your hands. I appoint you one of my aides, with the rank of captain, and you must take thirty men, and lead them back whence you came, to-morrow night. Mr. Bird will go with you to give you the benefit of his experience in such warfare. Do you understand me?"

"I do, General," replied Harry, "and I know that I am not competent. You will make a mistake. I never was in a battle in my life, and know nothing about military tactics."

"That will do, Captain. Those Tories up there don't know anything about military tactics either. War means death, destruction, utter annihilation. Show no mercy to Tories—shoot them, kill them wherever you find them. If you are prepared to do that, it will be enough."

"Mr. Bird, you know the men. Go among them and select such as you think will be the best for the work before them. Get a belt and sword for Captain Hinton, and introduce him to the men as an officer of my staff. Captain, I will see you to-morrow."

Harry and Sam saluted the General, and then followed Bird, the old scout, toward a large camp-fire on the farther side of the island.

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG AIDE'S FIRST CAPTURE—RETRIBUTION.

WHEN they reached the camp-fire at the farther side of the island, the old scout introduced Harry and Sam to a number of his acquaintances, saying to his friends at the time:

"We want thirty of the biggest dare-devils in camp."

"What's up, Bird?" a dozen asked at once.

"The Tories are up," he replied, "and we want thirty picked men to down them—who'll go?"

All the men in the camp were volunteers who had shouldered their rifles in defense of their country, because they loved liberty and hated tyranny. They were willing to risk their lives at any time in defense of their liberties. Hence, it is not to be wondered at that every man around that camp-fire promptly volunteered to go, and Bird had more difficulty in deciding who couldn't go than in saying who should. Some were so eager to be led against the hated Tories, that they swore like pirates when told that they must stay.

In a half hour the thirty men were chosen, and Captain Hinton introduced to them as their leader.

They respectfully saluted him, and gathered around to take his hand.

"Men," said Harry, "General Sumter has made me captain and appointed me to lead you against my Tory neighbors, who are plotting the destruction of all our friends. I know little about war, and the General has told me that all we need do is to kill the Tories, and I guess he knows what's best."

The men burst out laughing, and many remarked that the General's head was level.

"When it comes to shooting and killing," continued Harry, "I reckon I can do my share of the work. If you obey orders, and follow me, you will be very sure of having a chance to kill a good many Tories."

"That's just what we want," the men responded.

"We are to start to-morrow night. Let every man be ready."

He then dismissed the men, and, turning to Bird, asked:

"Where will we sleep to-night?"

"On the ground, of course," was the blunt reply.

"Well, I knew *that*," said Harry. "I only wanted to find a bed that didn't belong to somebody else."

"Anywhere on the bosom of Mother Earth," said Bird, laughing, extending his arms, and making a gesture as if to indicate the whole earth. "It's a big bed, and there's room for all."

"That's so," said Harry. "Sam and I are tired—we'll turn in now."

"There's a tree over there," said Bird, pointing in a southerly direction. "If you lie down under that you'll be protected from the dew, and will be in nobody's way."

Harry and Sam bade him good-night, and made their way to the tree that had been pointed out to them.

Its spreading boughs and heavy foliage offered ample shelter, and the green grass beneath it invited them to repose.

Stretching themselves at full length on the grass, the two young men began a conversation in low tones.

"It seems like a dream to me, Sam," said Harry. "I can't realize that I'm an officer in the patriot army."

"Nor I, either," returned Sam. "It is the strangest thing I ever heard of."

"I never heard of such a thing, either. It all came about by my unexpected meeting with the general this morning, while waiting for you in the woods by the roadside. I came very near shooting him, thinking he was a Tory. He questioned me, and I questioned him, both of us being afraid to let the other see his hand. How father and mother will open their eyes when they hear of it!"

"Yes," said Sam; "and they'll soon hear of it, too, when we commence downing those Tories up there."

"But won't the Tories be mad?" said Harry.

"Yes, and they'll try to burn your father's house in revenge."

"I'll see that there are none of them left to do that."

By and by they grew drowsy, and slumbered, for they had tramped many a weary mile since leaving home.

Bird awoke them the next morning as the sun was gilding the tree tops, and the soldiers were busy cooking their morning meal. The old scout invited them to help him dispose of his rations, an invitation they gladly accepted, for they were ravenously hungry.

After breakfast, General Sumter's orderly summoned Harry to the General's headquarters.

Harry promptly followed him, and for two hours sat on a log by the side of the old warrior, giving him all the information he was in possession of, regarding the condition of affairs in his section.

"Now," said the General, when the conversation had ended, "Do your work well. Be off to-night, and when you are through, return here and report."

He then dismissed him with a friendly shake of the hand, and Harry went back to mingle again with the soldiers of the camp.

During the day Bird procured him a sword and belt, and gave him a few lessons in the art of fencing.

Harry had never handled a sword before, but he understood the art of fencing with a cane or stick, and was an expert boxer. Hence, the old scout found him a very apt pupil.

The day passed, and the twilight shadows settled over the camp.

Then a band of thirty-three horsemen, which included Bird, Harry and Sam, and the thirty picked men, carefully threaded their way through the swamp, from the island to the main land.

Reaching the road, a half-mile from the swamp, by the time the stars were well out, Harry cried:

"Now for a long run—follow me, men," and, putting

spurs to his horse, a coal black steed, of great spirit and speed, he dashed away like the wind, with his brave followers thundering behind him. Mile after mile was passed, and no halt was made until they reached the spot where, on the day before, the gallant young Captain and his comrade had shot the two Tories who had attempted to stop them.

"Halt!" cried the Captain, and the command instantly came to a halt, every one expecting a fight, thinking that the command came from some one in the bushes. A sharp clicking sound was heard as the men cocked their rifles for action.

"This is the place, isn't it, Sam?"

"Take two men," said Harry, "and see if the bodies are there yet."

Sam promptly dismounted, as did two others, and, dark as it was, made his way to the foot of the tree, where they had left the two dead Tories the day before. He felt all around with his feet, but failed to find any traces of them.

"Hanged if they haven't been removed," he said.

"Are you sure?" one of the men asked.

"Yes, we left them right here under the tree."

Then he called out to Captain Hinton.

"They are not here, Captain."

"The deuce! is that so. Strike a light and see what you can find."

The old scout sprang from his horse, produced a tinder-box, and in ten minutes had a light, by means of which they searched a considerable distance around the trees. About fifty yards farther into the woods they discovered a newly-made mound.

"Ah!" said the old scout, "they have been buried, which shows they had friends about. The pesky varmints are thick all around here, we'd better go back to the Captain and report."

They returned to the command and reported the facts to the young captain.

"Well, no matter," said Harry, "I only wanted Mr. Bird to see their faces to ascertain if he knew who they were. Mount again and forward."

The next moment they were thundering along the road again. Two hours later as they were approaching the river, where Sam and Harry had been halted the day before, Harry sent Sam and the old scout forward to see whether the ford was guarded."

"Let them capture you if they are there," he said to Bird, "and I, with six more men, will slip around through the bushes, and gather them in as soon as they commit themselves."

Bird and Sam started forward on foot, leaving their horses in charge of their companions. Then Harry and six of his men also dismounted and followed them, keeping well in the shadow of the trees and the roadside.

Just as Bird and Sam reached the banks of the river, a harsh voice from the bushes commanded them to halt.

"Hallo! who's that?" asked Bird.

In response to his query, four men came out of the bushes and surrounded them.

"Surrender," cried one of them, "or you are dead men."

"Of course we will," returned Bird, "I don't want to be a dead man."

"Very sensible," remarked one of the captors.

"Yes," said Bird, "a man is a fool to get killed when there is no need of it. Who are you, anyhow, and what do you want?"

"We are King's men, and we want you. Who are you, and where were you going?"

"My name is Bird, and we were going across the river."

"Thunder! are you the rebel Bird?" exclaimed one of the men.

"Yes, I suppose you fellows would call me a rebel."

"Great kingdoms!" exclaimed one of the men. "He's the very fellow we want, boys."

"Now, what do you want of me?" Bird asked.

"Well, we're going to send your head to Lord Rawdon. He'd give a thousand pounds for it. You are the most cantankerous rebel on the Santee."

"Jerusalem!" ejaculated Bird, "you don't mean to say you're going to kill me, do you?"

"Well, I reckon we'll hang you up just to see how long you can live in that position," and the four Tories chuckled with glee over the important capture they had made.

They took their rifles and pistols away from them, and then led them into the woods, about one hundred yards from the roadside, to a camp-fire down in a hollow, the light of which was completely shut out of view from the road. There were six other men sitting around the fire, who rose to their feet as they approached.

"Boys," said one of the captains in a voice of exultation, "we have caught Bird, the rebel scout and spy."

A suppressed cheer burst from the Tories as they crowded around the two prisoners; one of them immediately recognized Bird.

"Yes, that's him. I know him—I know him!" cried the man.

"Hallo, Snyder!" said Bird, laughing. "You here?"

"Yes, thank the Lord!"

"Why, how did you get away from us that night?"

"I just slid off in the dark," was the reply. "You were going to hang me, were you?"

"Yes, we hung the other fellows, and I reckon we'd have strung you up, too."

Exclamations of rage and hate burst from the Tories.

"By the king's beard!" exclaimed Snyder, "I knew we would catch you some day, Bird, and now that we have got you, Lord! how glad I am!" and the delighted Tory glanced around in gleeful ecstasy, in anticipation of wreaking vengeance on the famous patriot scout.

"Let's hang them both, right now!" exclaimed one.

"String them up!" chorused the whole party.

One of the men ran to where their horses were hitched, and returned with two halters.

"Now, Bird, you cantankerous rebel, your time has come!" cried Snyder.

"Yes," returned Bird, "I guess it has. I took the chances, and now I'm not going to beg. I don't tremble, nor look pale, do I?" and he looked Snyder straight in the eyes as he spoke.

"No, you don't, but I guess you'll kick a little when we string you up."

"They all do that, as for that matter," and Bird chuckled good-naturedly as they adjusted the halter around his neck.

"Blast my eyes!" exclaimed one of the Tories, "he's the coolest cuss I ever heard of."

"Oh, I'm used to it," said Bird. "I've been hung before. You fellows seem to have a dread of it. I like it."

"String him up," cried the leader, "and let him enjoy the fun, if he likes it."

Both prisoners were led under the outspreading branches of a gnarled old oak, and the ends of the halter were thrown over the limb.

While all this was taking place, Harry was waiting for reinforcements from his command, which he had sent for, on finding that there were ten Tories in the party.

Ten of his men came to his assistance and quietly surrounded the little camp, waiting patiently for the word of command from their young chief.

At a signal from Harry the sixteen men stepped forward and leveled their rifles at the Tories.

"Surrender, or you are dead men!" cried Harry.

Had the earth opened to swallow them the Tories could not have been more surprised than they were. They were completely dumfounded. Not one of them had his rifle in his hand.

"Ha, ha, ha!" chuckled Bird. "Go on with the hanging, gentlemen. I say, Snyder, ain't you glad?"

"God help us!" groaned Snyder, his face perfectly livid with fear and despair.

"Why, what's the matter with you?" demanded Bird. "You were dancing with joy just now."

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Snyder again, "he's got us sure, boys."

Just at that moment one of the Tories recognized Harry, then another, and another, until at least a half-dozen had discovered his identity.

They were astounded at seeing him in command of the party.

"Harry Hinton," cried one, "what does this mean?"

"It means that I am a Patriot," was the reply, "and that I am an officer, a captain on General Sumter's staff."

"And you are going to fight against your neighbors?" Snyder asked.

"Why, yes, ain't you fighting against yours? Haven't you banded together to rise up next Thursday night, and murder all the Patriots on the other side of the river?"

"No, no, no!" burst from all the prisoners.

"Now, see here," said Harry, drawing from his pocket the paper containing the list of all the Patriots, which General Sumter had returned to him. "Here are the names of all the men you were to kill, whose houses you were to burn, and families drive homeless to the woods. You see I know your game. I'm in possession of your plans, as well as the names of all the traitors in the district. Sam Strong and I made our escape, joined Sumter, who made me a Captain of his staff, and I am now come to hang every Tory engaged in this diabolical plot, all your names are here on this list. You are to meet at Ison's mill next Thursday night. Some of you will not be there, but I am quite sure that I will be thereabout with my brave men." Then turning to his men, he said:

"Time is short, we must cross the river to-night. String those men up."

Every Tory fell upon his knees, and shrieked for mercy.

"No," said Harry, "such mercy as you have shown to others shall you receive," and, in ten minutes, the fiends were dangling from the trees near the camp-fire.

CHAPTER IV.

LOVE AND WAR.

As soon as the Tories were strung up, Harry ordered their arms, ammunition, accoutrements and horses to be gathered, and then started back to the road with them.

"We may need the arms and horses," he said, "for our friends on the other side of the river."

"Look here," said Bird, in a whisper to Harry, "I want to make a suggestion to you, Captain."

"What is it? Mr. Bird? You know more about the business than I do."

"I want to say," remarked the scout, "that I think you'll make a mistake if you cross the river to-night."

"How so?" the young captain asked.

"Why, the Tories will find out about the presence of so large a force on the other side and may conclude not to make the attempt on Thursday night. Now I think that if you would remain on this side, watch the ford, keeping your men concealed in the woods, the Tories will all assemble at the mill, where we can fall upon them and cut them to pieces."

"Hanged if I don't think you are right, Mr. Bird, and I will follow your advice."

He instantly halted his men, and turned them back to the camp-fires, where the bodies of the Tories were still hanging to the trees, after sending a man back up the road to bring in the rest of his men. Then he ordered the dead Tories to be cut down and buried.

They took possession of the little camp where they were to remain for three or four days. Guards were placed out to prevent a surprise from any quarter, and the tired Patriots stretched themselves on the ground, and slept till morning.

At sunrise the command breakfasted, after which a guard was detailed to watch the ford.

"Now," said Harry, turning to Bird, "I am going over

the river to-day, and I want you to take command till I return."

"What are you going to do, captain?" the old scout asked.

"Why, I am going over to see a friend, and have him notify the Patriots to slip over here to us, one by one, on Wednesday night. If anything happens to me, attack the mill on Thursday night."

"When will you return, Captain?"

"I hope to get back before sunrise to-morrow, but, if I do not, don't be uneasy." Then unbuckling his belt, he gave his sword to Bird, mounted his horse, and rode away.

Crossing the river at the ford, he rode rapidly along a small settlement road to his father's house, taking his parents completely by surprise.

They knew he had gone to join Sumter, and had tried to dissuade him from that step. When he explained to them that the "Game Cock" had made him a captain of his staff, and placed him in command of a body of picked men, their fears at once vanished. He then told them of the diabolical plot of the Tories, and asked his father to go in one direction, while he went in another, to warn their friends, and asked him to meet him on Wednesday night at the ford of the Santee River.

They both started out, and ere sunset some twenty families, in which there were nearly two-score men, had been warned.

A little after sunset Harry approached the house of a well-known Tory, whose beautiful daughter Jessie was widely known as "The Belle of the Santee."

Dismounting and hitching his horse in a thicket, he crept around to the rear of the barn and watched his opportunity to speak to one of the negroes on the place.

He was well known to all the negroes on the farm, for he had been a welcome visitor to Mr. Morgan's family, until his sentiments about the war between the King and his colonies became known. Then Mr. Morgan forbade him his house, and enjoined his daughter against ever speaking to him again. But the fair Jessie loved the brave youth, and, instead of obeying her irate father, began to entertain rebellious sentiments herself towards the King.

Harry had no fears but that she would be true to him, and was careful not to excite the old Tory's ire by openly visiting her.

He had not been many minutes behind the barn ere "Old Ben," one of the negroes, came out to see about the stock. Harry slipped up behind him, and laid a hand on his shoulder, and called him by name.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Old Ben, springing aside. "Afore the Lord! Who am dat?"

"It is me, Ben—Harry Hinton."

"De Lord! Massa Harry, you'se done gone skeered me almost white!"

"Well, you'd like to be a white man, wouldn't you, Ben?"

"Yes, Massa Harry, but they don't make white folks outen niggers."

"Is Mr. Morgan in the house, Ben?"

"Yes, sah."

"Is Miss Jessie in?"

"Yes, sah."

"Can you tell her, Ben, that I am out here behind the barn?"

"Yes, sah."

"And not let any one else hear you?"

"Yes, sah, I spec' I kin."

"And never say anything about it to anybody?"

"I ain't a talking nigger, Massa Harry."

"Ah! I know you are a good man. Here's a shilling for you. Now go and tell her."

Old Ben hastened back to the house, and Harry patiently awaited the result of his message. The minutes seemed hours to him, so impatient was he to clasp the girl he loved to his heart again.

By and by he heard the rustling of a dress, and the next

moment a figure approached him. Peering through the darkness he saw that it was the form of a woman, and asked in a whisper:

"Jessie?"

"Harry?" she responded, and the next moment was clasped in his arms.

"Oh, Harry," she said, "they told me you had gone away."

"Yes, darling," he said, "but I have returned again, and have come to give you another proof of my love."

"There is no need of that, I know that you love me, Harry."

"I do with all my heart and soul," he whispered, pressing her hand to his heart. "You warned me of the plot of the King's friends in order that I and my father might escape the peril. I have now come to tell you to prevent, if you can, your father from attending the gathering of the Tories at Ison's mill, on Thursday night, for every man of them will either be killed or captured."

"Oh, Heavens, Harry!"

"Darling, listen," continued Harry. "I am a Patriot. I couldn't bear to hear of my friends being in such peril, and so Sam Strong and I carried the news to Sumter, and joined his standard. He made me a captain, and placed me in command of a body of picked men, and on Thursday night I will fight my first battle in defense of my country."

"Oh, Harry!" she cried, "you will be killed."

"No, no," he said, "don't worry about me; save your father. I must go now, but will return on Friday at the head of my men, and will see that your father takes the oath of allegiance to the Continental Congress. But, for your sake, I will see that not a hair of his head shall be harmed."

He pressed her to his heart again, imprinting a kiss on her warm lips, and then turned away and ran into the bushes, leaving her to return leisurely to the house.

Mounting his horse he entered the road and dashed away at a full speed. A mile beyond the Morgan place he was abruptly commanded to halt, and, reining up his steed, found himself confronted by three men with rifles leveled at his breast.

"Hallo!" he said. "What's this?"

"Who are you?" was returned.

"I am a kingsman," he replied, knowing that there were no patriots on the road in that locality.

"So are we," they returned, lowering their rifles. "Where are you from?"

"From Mr. Morgan's place."

"Where are you going?"

"To Doctor Turner's," he replied. "Mr. Morgan has been taken suddenly ill."

"The deuce you say! Why, we saw him at six o'clock."

"He was taken only a half hour ago."

"What with?"

"Cramp colic, sir."

They knew Morgan to be a stanch kingsman, and also Doctor Turner, so they let him go without thinking to question him more concerning himself.

"Go ahead," said one of the men; "we'll go down to Morgan's and stay with him till the doctor comes."

"Do so, sir. I know they will be glad to have you there, for he is in great pain, and Mistress Morgan and her daughter are crying and wringing their hands for fear he will die."

He then put spurs to his horse and dashed away muttering to himself:

"That was a narrow escape."

Having warned his friends and accomplished all he set out to do, the young aid hastened back towards the river, determined to recross and join his command, but he was not destined to return without trouble. When within a couple of miles of the river he was halted by two men, who compelled him to dismount, give up his rifle, and accompany them into the woods.

"Who are you?" one of the two men demanded.

Harry knew the man's voice. He was a neighbor who lived within half a mile of his father's house.

"I am Harry Hinton," he replied, seeing the uselessness of trying to conceal his identity.

"What! Harry Hinton?" the man exclaimed.

"Yes, and you know me well, Mr. Tuggles."

"Why, what are you doing here, Harry?" Tuggles asked.

"I am going across the river, sir."

"What for?"

"To return this horse to Mr. Barnes."

Tuggles knew that a family by the name of Barnes lived two miles beyond the river, and, therefore, thought that Harry was telling a straight story. But the two Tories whom Harry and Sam had forced to wade across the river at the ford, leaving their rifles behind them, had reported that the two youths had gone to join Marion or Sumter.

This fact induced Tuggles to closely question our hero.

"Where did you and Sam go a few days ago?" Tuggles asked.

"We went hunting over the river," was the reply.

"Hunting what?"

"Deer," said Harry.

"Now look here, Harry," said Tuggles, "didn't you and Sam go to join Sumter?"

"Mr. Tuggles," said Harry, "you have known me all my life, have you not?"

"Yes."

"Then why question me as to my affairs?"

"Because there are rebels and traitors in the land, Harry, and you are accused of being one of them."

During this conversation, Tuggles' companion was busy with his tinder-box, trying to strike a light. Harry watched his opportunity to draw his knife and plunge it to the hilt in the breast of Tuggles.

"I'm stabbed!" cried the Tory, staggering back and falling against his companion, who was down on his knees.

The other one sprang to his feet, knife in hand, and confronted Harry. Having disposed of Tuggles, Harry rushed at the other like an enraged tiger, and a terrible hand-to-hand struggle ensued.

Neither could well see the weapons of the other in the darkness, so it was sheer good luck on the part of Harry that his weapon struck that of the other, knocking it from his hand.

"Quarter!" cried the other, dropping on his knee; "I am unarmed."

His cry came too late to save him, for a sweep of Harry's blade severed the jugular vein of his neck, and with a groan he rolled over on the ground in the agonies of death.

"I'm in luck to-night," said Harry, "for I thought they had me. To be caught now is sure death. Those two fellows at the river must have told everybody that Sam and I had turned rebels. The quicker I get back to the other side the better it will be for me," and, leading his horse out by the roadside, he sprang into the saddle and once more pushed forward towards the river.

CHAPTER V.

THE YOUNG AID'S FIRST BATTLE.

IN a few minutes the young aid reached the river, and plunged boldly in. Arriving at the opposite side, he was promptly halted by his own guards, to whom he gave the pass-word, and was then conducted back to his camp.

All the men were asleep except the sentinels. Stretching himself on the ground beneath a spreading tree, he was soon soundly sleeping, dreaming of the fair Jessie, whose kisses seemed yet warm on his lips.

The old scout when he awoke the next morning, was somewhat surprised at finding Harry had returned.

When he arose from his slumbers, Harry informed him of everything that had transpired except in his interview with Jessie Morgan. That affair he considered personal

to himself, and did not care that others should know of it.

The day was spent by the patriots in securing rations. Game was plentiful, and by sunset they had secured enough to last them a week.

Shortly after dark the patriots began to come in from over the river, and among them was Harry's father himself. They kept coming by ones and twos until near midnight, by which time the young aid found his force increased to more than three-score men, all armed to the teeth.

The most of the new-comers were greatly surprised to find Harry in command, and some of them doubted his ability to command in a fight, but Bird, who was known to all of them, assured them that Harry was just the man for the place.

The night passed without any occurrences of note, and during the day that followed, active preparations were made for the fight.

Harry appointed Bird second in command, and then prepared to start as soon as the stars were out, so as to reach the mill a little before midnight.

Leading his band across the river, he turned into a road little used, but which was the most direct route from the river to Ison's mill. In three hours they came in sight of the camp-fires, of which there were several near the old mill.

The old scout estimated that there were nearly one hundred Tories present. Their arms were stacked against the trees, and ammunition was being issued to the men by two agents of the British commander, who had sent it in a peddler's wagon.

When Bird made his report, after having passed completely around the Tory camp, Harry concluded that then was the time to strike.

He divided his command, and told Bird to lead half of them around to the north side.

"I will strike them on the south," he said, "and push them over against you. You will know what to do then. Go ahead."

Bird silently led his thirty men around to the farther side of the Tory camp, Harry giving him a half hour to reach the point.

"Now," said the young aid, turning to his men, "you understand we mean to kill or capture yonder band of Tories. They are our worst enemies, far worse than the British. They outnumber us two to one, but we have the advantage, as they do not dream of our presence here. Let every man take deliberate aim and wait for the word 'Fire.' Now, follow me quietly till we get them in range. Come on."

Harry led the way down the hill and around the foot of another to a thicket within thirty or forty yards of the Tory camp.

"Let every man take aim now," he whispered, "and make every shot count."

Thirty rifles were silently leveled towards the unsuspecting Tories. The young aide aimed his own at a gaunt sand-hiller, and in clear, ringing tones cried out:

"Patriots, FIRE!"

Thirty rifles belched forth a death-dealing volley, and a score or more Tories bit the dust, whilst the others, with yells of terror, made a break for their weapons, stacked against the trees. A minute later a withering volley from the old scout on the opposite side sent another score of them to earth.

The carnage was simply awful. Every man of the patriots was an experienced hunter. Such men in battle seldom throw away their bullets.

"FIRE!" cried Harry again, and again a death-dealing volley swept through the panic-stricken ranks of the Tories, who, finding themselves completely surrounded, threw away their weapons, fell on their knees, and cried lustily for quarter.

"Charge!" cried Harry, in ringing tones, and with drawn sword, he dashed forward, followed by his riflemen.

"Quarter! quarter! quarter!" screamed the terror-stricken Tories. "We surrender! we surrender!"

The old scout closed in on them on the farther side, so that not a dozen out of the hundred escaped.

Among the living and the dead, Harry recognized many familiar faces; many of them were neighbors whom he had known all his life. They had been friends, but now the lurid flames of war blazed about them, and neighbors' hands were lifted against neighbor in a deadly struggle for the mastery.

When they discovered that Harry was in command of their captors, a dozen or more Tories sprang to their feet, claiming protection at his hands.

The young captain was stern and terrible in his wrath.

"No!" cried he, in ringing tones; "you deserve no protection. You met here to-night to murder your Whig neighbors, because they dared rebel against a tyrant who lives three thousand miles away, and sends his red-coated soldiers to crush out their liberties. A country justly belongs to its inhabitants. We have rebelled against a king who never saw this country. You have rebelled against the land which gave you birth. Here, now," he exclaimed, snatching the blood-stained paper from his pocket, which he had shown to General Sumter, and waving it above his head, "is a list of all your Whig neighbors, prepared by your leaders, and whom you were going to murder to-night. By the deep villainy of your king, every man of you ought to swing from the limbs over your head."

His voice was ringing as he spoke, and his eyes flashed and blazed with fiery indignation, until old neighbors who had always looked upon him as simply a bright, spirited youth, trembled before him like culprits, lashed by his scathing denunciations.

"There is only one way by which you can escape hanging," he continued, "and that is by taking the oath of allegiance to the Continental Congress, and contributing liberally of your means to the support of the patriot army. Those of you who do not do so shall hang by the neck till you are dead," and the emphasis of his words left no doubt in the minds of the Tories that he meant what he said.

When he had finished speaking, the delighted patriots gave three lusty cheers for their young leader, and then the old scout proceeded to administer the oath of allegiance to each and every one of the prisoners. Not one of them dared refuse.

Bud, however, discovered among their number four men to whom he had administered the oath down on the Pedee, two months before.

"Ah!" he said, "my fine fellows, I know you. Captain, here are four men who have taken the oath before."

"Are you sure of that?" Harry asked.

"I am," was the reply.

"Then swing them up without delay."

The wretches begged for mercy, but there was none for such as they. They were swung up without ceremony, and, in the presence of such an awful example of the punishment that was sure to follow disloyalty, the rest of the prisoners went on taking the oath of allegiance. More than one half of their number had been killed or wounded. Not one of the patriots had been hurt.

The unhurt prisoners were detailed under guard to bury their dead comrades, and that sad duty was performed with but little ceremony.

Harry searched everywhere among the dead and living for Mr. Morgan, the father of Jessie; he failed to find him, and, therefore, concluded that his daughter had succeeded in keeping him away from the gathering.

"My son," said Mr. Hinton, going up to Harry, "what are you going to do with these prisoners? Most of them are our neighbors."

"I am going to take them to General Sumter, father. I have no discretion in the matter."

"But their families will suffer," protested his father.

"Yes, father, but far better for Tory families to suffer than Whig. War means suffering, death, and destruction, and the losing side suffers most. If they had kept quiet, stayed at home, and attended to their own private affairs, this would never have happened."

The elder Hinton turned away, seeing how useless it was to contend with his son, who had suddenly developed into a full-fledged man with wonderful nerve and will-power.

Watching his opportunity, Harry whispered to Bird, and asked.

"What must I do with these prisoners? It won't do to hang them."

"No, of course, we cannot hang them," said Bird. "I think you had better send a courier to General Sumter and let him decide what to do with them."

"That is just what I was thinking of, Mr. Bird. You know these men. Select the best one to send to Sumter and then count the prisoners, the wounded, and the dead, and I'll write a dispatch for him to carry."

Bird selected a man and then proceeded to sum up the results of the fight, which he embodied in a note to General Sumter.

"Now put the prisoners under a strong guard, Mr. Bird, and I will put a double line of sentinels around the camp, and stay here till we hear from the General."

"That won't do, Captain," said Bird, shaking his head.

"Why, what's the matter?" Harry asked.

"If you stay here until noon to-morrow," replied Bird, "you'll have a hundred tory women weeping, and wailing, and pulling their hair, around you, and you'll find them much harder to manage than these men."

"Holy Moses!" gasped Harry, "I never thought of that. Where shall we go?"

"I reckon we'd better cross over the river and camp where we were yesterday."

"Ah! that's it," said Harry. "I'll parole these wounded men and leave them here in charge of our neighbors who came to help us, and with the command go back over the river after daylight."

He then instructed the courier where to find him when he returned from General Sumter, and sent him away.

Sentinels were placed out, and prisoners and captors lay down to sleep.

At sunrise the patriots, after breakfasting sumptuously on the rations brought by the Tories the night before, gathered up the arms, ammunition, and horses, and returned across the river, encamping on the very spot, where three nights before, they had hanged ten Tories.

The expedition had been a complete success, and the fight was the hardest blow the Tories had yet received on the Santee. It spread consternation among the royalists throughout that part of the State, and the name of Sumter's young aid at once became a terror among his Tory neighbors.

In the afternoon Harry took ten men with him and re-crossing the river, proceeded straight to the Morgan place.

He found the family in a state of terror. They had received news of the terrible fight of the night before, and were bewailing the complete overthrow of the royalist cause in that section.

Harry dismounted and walked boldly up to the piazza, where he was received by the gentle Jessie with smiles and tears.

"Oh, Harry," she said, "they talk perfectly awful about you."

"Of course they do," he replied. "If the royalists were to praise me, the patriots would question my patriotism."

Just then Mr. Morgan came out on the piazza, and angrily exclaimed:

"I have forbidden you my house, Harry Hinton, and yet do you dare to come here again?"

"I am Captain Hinton, Mr. Morgan," said Harry, "of

General Sumter's staff. I am not aware that Captain Hinton has been forbidden to enter your house."

"I do forbid it," roared the irate old Tory. "I forbid you speaking to my daughter. I forbid her speaking to you, sir."

"Mr. Morgan," said Harry, "you were not at the gathering of your friends last night. It is well for you that you were not. But for me, you would have been there. You might have been killed. As it is, you are simply a prisoner of war."

"A prisoner!" gasped the old Tory.

"Yes, sir, a prisoner. You conspired with your friends to rise up and murder your whig neighbors, and, now, unless you take the oath of allegiance to the Continental Congress, I shall be under the painful necessity of dragging you off to the prison pens in the swamps, to be kept there until exchanged, or until the end of the war."

The old Tory uttered a groan, sank down on a chair, and glared helplessly around him.

"Must I forswear allegiance to my King?" he demanded.

"Yes," said Harry, "and swear allegiance to your country, where you justly owe it."

"Well, I suppose I can't help myself."

"You can take your choice, sir, but if you take the oath, and are even found giving aid and comfort to the enemies of your country, you will be hanged for treason."

"Give me the oath," he said. "The King cannot help me now."

He took the oath, signed his name to it, and then staggered back into the house, a sadder, madder, and much wiser man.

CHAPTER VI.

HARRY'S FIGHT WITH THE OLD TORY—THE NIGHT ATTACK.

WHEN the old Tory retired into the house, his daughter Jessie remained on the piazza with the young aid.

"Oh, Harry," she said, "he will never—never forgive you!"

"Yes, he will," returned Harry. "After awhile he will see that I have only done my duty to my country, and he naturally likes a man who stands up for what believes is right."

"But you have threatened him, and forced him to do a thing against his inclination, and that he will never forgive."

"I think time and the success of our cause will soften his feelings of resentment; at least, I hope so for your sake as well as mine. But come what will, darling, you will be true to me, will you not?"

"Yes, Harry, while life lasts, I will be true to you, and will be your wife whenever you come to claim me."

"Never—never so help me God!" roared the old Tory, bursting out upon them like an enraged bull, and, seizing Harry by his coat collar, he shook him till his hat fell off and his teeth rattled.

"Leave my house, you young scapegrace," he yelled, "and if you ever set foot on my premises again I'll murder you!"

His will, passion, and voluble vehemence, coupled with his vigorous action, caused Jessie to scream and rush into the house.

Harry was loath to strike the old man, because he was the father of Jessie; but knowing that his ten men were looking on from their saddles, and fearing that the old man might think that he didn't amount to much, after all, he concluded to give him a taste of what he could do.

Now Harry was very strong, active, and tough; and, in about half a minute from the time he began to put in his work, the old Tory was lying on his back on the piazza, wondering what had suddenly set the stars in motion. There seemed to be a million of them flashing before his eyes.

When he came to, he found Harry standing over him, blandly smiling down at him.

"How do you feel now, Mr. Morgan?" Harry asked. "Do you think you have got enough?"

"Did you strike me, sir, you impudent young traitor?" the irate old Tory asked.

"I did," said Harry, his eyes flashing, "and I'm going to make you take back your epithets of impudent traitor or else thrash you within an inch of your life."

The old man was game. He rose to his feet, and rushed at the young aid like a mad bull.

Harry received him with a tremendous blow between his eyes that laid him flat on his back again.

By this time Jessie and her mother ran out screaming, both wringing their hands and crying:

"Part them! part them! don't let them fight!"

"Don't be uneasy," said Harry, "I won't hurt him much. Merely want to take the conceit out of him."

"But he is my father!" indignantly returned Jessie, "and old enough to be your father!"

"So he is," replied Harry, "but he is not too old to learn a good lesson," and with that he sent the old man to grass again.

"Will you take it back now?" Harry asked, as the old Tory rose to a sitting posture.

"No!" roared the old man. "You are an impudent traitor!"

"By the ghost of all the fools!" cried Harry, "you will take it back, or I will send your ghost to join them!" And with that he got the old man's head in chancery, and rattled blow after blow upon it, till he bellowed for quarter.

"Do you take it back?" demanded Harry, still pounding away.

"Enough, enough!" cried the old man. "Do you want to kill me?"

"Take it back, take it back!" exclaimed Harry, giving him two or three more tremendous thumps.

"Yes, yes, I take it back. For God's sake, let me go!"

"That's right," said Harry, releasing him. "Why didn't you say so before?"

"Leave my premises!" said the old Tory, staggering away.

"Oh!" said Harry, running up to him, "you haven't got enough yet. Take that back, for I intend to come to see your daughter as often as I can, and it is agreeable to her."

At that moment Jessie rushed between him and her father, and laying both hands on Harry's uplifted arm, exclaimed:

"Harry Hinton, if you strike my father again you will strike me, and then we part forever."

"Then I will not strike him," said Harry, "even though he should spit upon me and strike me to the earth."

"He shall not do that, Harry. Oh, this is awful!" and then she burst into tears.

"Don't cry, Jessie, don't cry," said Harry. "I am sorry I struck him, but he shook me, and called me 'an impudent traitor,' and that caused me to lose my temper. Do you forgive me?"

"Yes, yes," she replied, "but go away now and come again when father gets over it."

"I will do as you say, Jessie," and, pressing his lips to her hand, he said good-bye, turned, walked to his horse, sprang into the saddle, and dashed away, followed by his men.

He never spoke a word till he reached the river, when he turned to one of his men by his side and remarked:

"I'm sorry I struck the old man."

"We all thought you did just right, captain, and are glad you gave it to him as you did."

"Still, I ought not to have done it," said Harry, "and I wouldn't if he had not laid hands on me."

The young aid led his men across the stream and rejoined the old scout and the others at the camp.

Bird reported that the messenger to Sumter had not returned, and that he did not think he would before the next day.

"Well, we will have to wait," said Harry, "and be guided by circumstances."

About two hours after Harry left old Tory Morgan, and, while the old man was pacing up and down the floor, hurling anathemas at Harry and all the patriots, mentally consigning them to the hottest regions of Purgatory, a troop of British cavalry rode up; their brilliant red uniforms and flashing sabers, coupled with their splendid discipline, set the old Tory wild with joy.

He burst out bareheaded, and embraced the officer in command of the troopers.

The officer was Captain Graham, of Tarleton's command, with a company of sixty men.

"Captain, captain!" cried Morgan, "a band of rebels has just left here after beating me nearly to death. For God's sake pursue them—they have been gone but a little while."

"Which way did they go?" asked Captain Graham.

"To the river—to the river!" exclaimed the excited old man.

"How many were there?"

"Eleven of them. A captain, Harry Hinton, and ten men."

"Sergeant Green," said the captain, turning to his burly sergeant, "take ten men and catch these fellows if you can. We will stay here till to-morrow morning."

The sergeant selected ten stalwart troopers and dashed off at full speed towards the river.

"God bless you, captain!" said Morgan. "All that I have is at your command."

Captain Graham directed his men to dismount and pitch camp in the grove fronting the house, and then accompanied the host within.

When the fair Jessie saw that the king's troops were pursuing Harry, her heart sunk like a lump of lead in her bosom. She could not welcome Captain Graham, who had on several occasions been her father's guest. She thought surely Harry's time had come, that he would be overwhelmed in the conflict with the king's troops, and, therefore, retired to the privacy of her room to weep and mourn in all the agony of a terrible suspense.

Her father, however, seemed to have renewed his youth, for, notwithstanding his face was terribly battered and bruised, he strove to entertain Captain Graham and his officers, setting before them his wines and liquors, and ordering his servants to kill an ox for the men.

Sergeant Green made a rapid run, reaching the river about an hour after Harry and his men had crossed.

The patriot guard on the other side caught a glimpse of their red uniform, and, in a moment had counted their strength—eleven of them.

Of course, word was hurried to Harry of their presence. He was astonished, and, quickly gathering twenty men, he hastened to the ford, leaving ten to guard the prisoners.

When he reached the point whence the red-coats could be seen, he sent a half-dozen men out into the road in order that the troopers might see them.

No sooner did the sergeant catch a glimpse of them, than he cried, "Forward!" and dashed into the stream followed by his men.

Seeing them coming, Harry ordered his men in ambush.

"There are only eleven of them," he said, "and we could easily capture them, as we are two to one, but we have more prisoners than we know what to do with. So, as soon as they arrive abreast of us, we will pick off every man except the leader. We'll capture him and make him tell us where the others are."

The sergeant and his ten troopers reached the opposite bank and started up the hill in pursuit of the men he had seen. Just as they arrived abreast of Harry's position he gave the command to fire, and ten red-coats rolled in the dust riddled with bullets.

Only Sergeant Green remained in his saddle, and ere the smoke of the volley had blown away the sergeant was surrounded and a dozen rifles leveled at his breast.

"Surrender!" cried Harry in ringing tones.

"Lord! Yes!" cried the sergeant. "Don't shoot!"

"Dismount and give up your sword," ordered Harry, and he promptly obeyed.

"Are you Captain Hinton?" the sergeant asked as he handed Harry his sword.

"Yes," said Harry, "that is my name. How did you know it?"

"Mr. Morgan told us your name and which way you had gone, and Captain Graham, of His Majesty's Horse, ordered us to follow and bring you back; but, Lord bless you, sir, we can't do it nohow, sir!"

While he was speaking Harry's eyes flashed and his lips compressed.

"So Mr. Morgan put you on our track, did he?" he cried.

"Yes, sir. He was overjoyed to see us, and said that you had beaten him nearly to death, and, Lord bless you, sir! he looked as if he had been fighting a battering-ram."

"Well, we will go back with you, sergeant," said Harry, his eyes flashing and his lips set with a terrible determination. "How many red-coats has Captain Graham with him?"

"About fifty, sir," was the reply.

Harry ordered the dead red-coats to be buried in the woods near the roadside. Their arms to be gathered up, and their horses caught and taken to his little camp, where he held a hasty consultation with the old scout.

Ten minutes later Sam Strong and half a dozen men left on horseback, crossed the river, and hastened among the Whig residents to summon twenty of them to the little camp.

Two or three hours later they began to come in by twos and threes, and in five hours Sam and his men were back again.

Harry told his patriot neighbors that he merely wanted them to guard his prisoners, in order that he and his old veterans might be free to pay Captain Graham a visit.

Of course, the Whig's cheerfully complied with his request, and, at an hour before midnight, Harry led his thirty picked men across the Santee, and pushed on toward the British camp at Morgan's.

When within a mile of the place, they caught sight of the British camp-fire. They dismounted, hitched their horses in the wood, and then crept forward on foot.

All but the sentinels were fast asleep. The regular, ceaseless, sleepless movement of the sentinels deeply impressed Harry with the power and strength of discipline, as he himself knew but little of military tactics.

Halting the command at a safe distance, he sent the scout forward to reconnoiter, and patiently waited till he should return and report.

At the end of a half hour Bird returned, and told Harry that on the south side, they could approach under cover of the trees to within forty or fifty yards of the sleeping enemy.

"Ah!" said Harry, "I know the spot well. Follow me, men. Let every one keep silent, and be ready to fire at the word."

Like silent specters the thirty picked men followed their leader along under the dark shadow of the trees till they reached a point whence they could see the form of every red-coat by the aid of the flickering light of the camp-fire.

Silently they stood like grim harbingers of death, each man with his eye on his young leader, watching for his signal to take aim.

The silence of death pervaded the camp, save now and then a snore from one of the unconscious sleepers.

Harry silently waved his sword above his head, and then pointed towards the sleeping Britons. His men saw and understood the movement. They leveled their rifles and aimed in the same direction.

"FIRE!" commanded Harry in ringing tones, and thirty rifles sent their messengers of death into the midst of the sleeping Britons.

There were only fifty of them, and half of them were des-

tinged never to rise again. The others sprang to their feet, threw themselves into a position of defense, and awaited the command of their leader.

Captain Graham slept in the house, leaving the duties of the camp to his subordinate officers, one of whom was killed at the first volley.

As soon as his men had reloaded their rifles, Harry called out to the redcoats:

"Surrender—you are surrounded."

But the young officer in command was game, and ordered his men to fire in the direction of Harry's voice.

"Lie down, quick!" whispered Harry to his men, in a voice loud enough to be heard by them.

Every man threw himself flat on the ground, and a moment later a shower of bullets whistled through the branches over their heads.

"Now let them have it again," cried Harry, springing to his feet, and his men responded with a tremendous volley, that sent a dozen red-coats rolling over on the grass.

That was too much for the red-coats with all their discipline. They threw down their arms and cried:

"We surrender—we surrender."

"Cease firing, men," cried Harry, and then he stepped forth, and received the sword from the young officer in token of surrender.

"Mr. Bird," said Harry, turning to the old scout, "take ten men and quickly surround the house. Let no one escape."

Bird hastened to obey the order, whilst Harry proceeded to place the prisoners under guard and to look after the wounded.

CHAPTER VII.

A CUNNING DODGE OF THE LOVERS.

At the first volley fired by the patriots, the members of the Morgan household sprang from their beds in terrified alarm.

Captain Graham, who occupied the guest room in the upper part of the house, knowing that it meant a night attack on his camp, made all haste to dress himself and rush to their assistance. Ere he was half dressed he heard the second volley fired by his own men, followed immediately by another from the patriots. Then the silence that followed caused him to shudder with apprehension.

Pulling on his boots, bare headed and coatless, with naked sword in hand, he dashed down stairs and plunged out into the yard, only to find himself surrounded by the patriots.

A moment later he was followed by the old tory himself. Graham refused to surrender and was promptly seized and bound.

"My God! Captain," said the old man, "what's the matter?"

"We are captured, Mr. Morgan."

"Who has captured you?"

"Why, the rebels, of course," was the bitter reply.

Bird stepped up to the old tory and laid a hand on his shoulder, saying:

"You are a prisoner, also, Mr. Morgan."

"Who are you?" demanded the old tory.

"My name is Bird; I belong to Captain Hinton's command."

"My God!" gasped the old man. "Is Hinton here?"

"Yes; he is attending to the red-coats out there."

The old tory gave a groan that must have come from the bottom of his stomach.

"I am ruined!" he moaned.

"Yes," said Bird, "I believe you took the oath of allegiance to the Continental Congress not ten hours ago. I would not give ten shilling for your life, sir."

The old man turned ashen pale, and looked appealingly around as if in search of some one.

"Where is Captain Hinton?" he asked hoarsely.

"He is around," said Bird; "you will see him soon enough."

Just then the young aide came up, greatly elated over his victory. Such fortune as he had met with had seldom come to him even in his wildest dreams.

"Captain Hinton," cried the old man, turning appealingly to him, "what are you going to do with me?"

"If there's a limb on your place strong enough to hold your weight, you will hang from it at sunrise to-morrow morning."

The old tory fell on his knees and began pleading piteously for his life.

"It is no use, Mr. Morgan," said Harry. "I warned you of this when you took the oath. Away with him! Mr. Bird. Keep him under a double guard till sunrise."

The patriots took him by the arms, and led him away, and placed him among the red-coat prisoners out in the grove.

By this time, Jessie and her mother had dressed themselves, and both came running out on the piazza.

"My father! my father!" cried Jessie. "Where is he?"

"He is a prisoner, miss," replied one of the patriots, "out there among those red coats."

Filled with alarm for the safety of her father, Jessie Morgan sprang from the piazza, and ran with all her speed toward the camp-fire. When about half way there, she met Harry.

"Oh! Harry! Harry!" she cried, throwing herself into his arms, "is it you that have done this thing?"

"Yes, Jessie," he replied, "we have whipped the King's troops, and they are our prisoners. I don't think a dozen of them escaped."

"But my father—where is he, Harry?"

"Oh, we've got him safe enough."

"What are you going to do with him?" she asked.

"Jessie," he replied, "you know he took the oath of allegiance not ten hours ago, and only two hours later he set the King's troops after me, and we had to fight desperately for our lives. We killed and captured the detachment sent in pursuit of us, and then returned here and surprised the camp, killing, wounding, and capturing nearly the entire command. Were it any one else but me, your father would be hung at sunrise. In fact, I told him just now that he would be hung at that time, but, you know very well that I wouldn't hang your father, darling." But I'm going to let him think so, and when you see him, you must tell him you think you are sure you can save him, if he will give his consent for you to become my wife.

"But if he will not consent, Harry," she replied, "what then?"

"Don't have any fears about that, Jessie; for when he feels the halter around his neck and the other end of it thrown over a limb, with two men standing by ready to pull him up, he will be willing to accept the devil for a son-in-law. Don't be uneasy, but let's play the game on him; and then when the war is ended and we are happily married, we'll tell him all about it. But you must not say a word to any one about it—not even your mother."

"No—no, Harry, I won't breathe a word of it to a living soul."

"Very well, then. Now run and see him."

She broke from him and ran on to the camp where, heedless of the armed guards around him, she rushed into her father's arms and threw hers around his neck.

"Oh, father—father!" she cried; "they say they will hang you!"

"Yes, my child," he said, breaking down and sobbing hysterically; "they will hang me—they will hang me!"

Jessie put her lips to her father's ear and whispered:

"Father, you know that Harry loves me and that I love him dearly. I know that I can save you, if you will let me tell him that you will consent to my becoming his wife."

"Well, well, my child," he whispered, "be it as you say; but it is hard to give you up to such as he."

"Now you mustn't think that way, father. You must never withdraw your consent after once you have given it."

"No, no; if you save my life, I will not retract my promise."

Jessie then left him and hurried back to the house, where she found her mother in tears.

Mrs. Morgan had overheard some of the patriot's talking, and had thus learned that her husband was to be hung at sunrise. Her anguish was indescribable, and Jessie could not endure the sight of her sufferings. She knew that her mother was aware of her engagement to Harry, and therefore did not hesitate to speak to her about it.

She put her arms around her, and told her she was sure that Harry's love for her was strong enough to make him pardon her father, for I will tell him that, unless he does, I can never be his.

The mother threw her arms around her daughter, and showered her blessings upon her.

Jessie sprang up, ran out of the house, and went in search of Harry. She found him and told him what her father had said.

He kissed her and said:

"Now, run and tell him that he shall be spared, but that a repetition of the offense will prove to him that no person on earth can save him again."

Jessie did so, and it was easy to see what a load was lifted from the mind of the old tory. He was allowed to return to the house, where Harry Short shook hands with him, remarking as he did so:

"I bear you no malice, Mr. Morgan. If we do not remain friends the fault will be your, not mine, for I would like to call you father, and be to you as a dutiful son."

"Well," said the old man, dropping into a seat and drawing a long breath of relief, "we will let the past be forgotten."

"Yes," said Harry, "for it will not be pleasant for either of us to remember. I know not when I can return to claim Jessie, but I will be true to her and never commit any act that she or you could be ashamed of."

When shaking hands with the father and mother, and pressing Jessie once more to his heart, he left the house and returned to the camp.

When the Morgan family arose the next morning they found that the young aid had gathered his prisoners and spoils and silently stolen away, leaving the dead and the very badly wounded to the care of the family.

As in duty bound by the dictates of a common humanity, Mr. Morgan buried the dead and removed the wounded into his house, where they received all the attention his family could bestow.

On reaching his camp on the other side of the Santee, Harry found that his messenger, whom he had sent to General Sumter, had returned, bringing him instructions to release on parole all the resident tory prisoners he had captured.

Harry was greatly relieved on receiving the order, and immediately told the prisoners that they could return to their homes.

Then, after consultation with the old scout, he concluded to set out for Sumter's camp with his red-coat prisoners. Securing them to their horses, he proceeded to break up camp, and, in a few minutes, they were on their way.

It was after sunset when he struck the edge of the swamp in which "The Game Cock" had his rendezvous.

Bird gave the signals that notified the guards that they were coming with red-coat prisoners. A patriot was mounted behind each prisoner, to make sure that none of them escaped while in the swamp.

They reached the island camp in safety with over a score of redcoat prisoners, and were received with shouts of welcome.

General Sumter, who had just returned from an expedition, grasped Harry's hand, and exclaimed,

"I congratulate you, Captain Hinton. I was sure I had made no mistake when I made you one of my aids, but you have exceeded my most sanguine expectations."

Harry blushed like a school-girl, and replied:

"I did my best, General."

"That's it! that's it," exclaimed the General. "Let every man do his best, and we shall have no fears of the result."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONCLUSION.

THE next day after Harry's return to camp, the news came that Tarleton, that fierce rider, who had long been the scourge of the Carolinas, was coming after "The Game Cock."

With an equal number of men Sumter would never have hesitated to meet him in battle, but Tarleton, having two to his one, the flower of the British army, the wily Sumter was not to be caught in a trap of that kind.

He silently folded his tents and crept out of the back door, if slipping across the swamps from the opposite side of the island could be so called.

He got away with his prisoners and turned them over to General Greene, who sent them to the prisons at Salisbury.

Then the wily partisan turned and made a wide circuit and got in the rear of Tarleton's command, and there found to his utter astonishment that the British commander had left one company of his troopers on the Santee as a nucleus for the tories to rally around. But his rage at the destruction of Captain Graham's command caused him to push madly onward in the vain hope of overtaking and crushing "The Game Cock."

Resuming his old position in the swamp, he sent out Bird and several other experienced scouts to watch the Tories, and ascertain if any of them joined, or in any way aided the enemy.

It was ascertained that nearly a score of those who had taken the oath of allegiance at Ison's mill, had joined the red-coats, thinking that they would be strong enough to overwhelm and punish their Whig neighbors for their recent defeat.

They were encamped at Bradford Spring, and were making preparations to sweep through the district, and carry out their original plot for the destruction of their Whig neighbors.

In the meantime Sumter's scouts were closely watching them. Every movement they made was reported to Sumter, who again placed his young aide at the head of a body of picked men with instructions to capture the whole command, and punish those perjured Tories as they deserved.

Harry immediately set out again, and arrived in the vicinity of the camp, on a very dark night. But he knew every inch of the ground, and was at no loss to know what to do, or when, or where to strike.

Dividing his command into two equal forces, he placed one in charge of the old scout, and then moved forward to the attack.

One of the patriots, in the excitement of the moment, pressed his finger too hard upon the trigger of his rifle, causing it to be discharged prematurely before they had reached the point of attack.

The British sentinels, at once divining the cause of the shot as being due to the presence of an enemy, discharged their muskets and aroused the camp.

The British and Tories immediately sprang to arms, and returned the patriot fire shot for shot.

The fight was hotly contested for upwards of an hour, at which time, being placed between two fires, the British gave the command to retreat.

Then a wild panic ensued among the Tories. They thought defeat had again come upon them, and that they would reap the reward of their treachery.

The ran howling through the woods in such frantic terror that only five of them were captured, and the same number of red-coats who were wounded, while about twice as many were killed.

The five tory prisoners were questioned as to which of their neighbors had come with them, and they, in the vain hope of thereby saving their wretched lives, gave the names of all of them. They were then strung up without any ceremony and left hanging to the limbs as a warning to others, after which Harry set off in pursuit of the fleeing red-coats.

He pursued them all night and emptied many a saddle before sunrise.

By that time, fearing that they might strike reinforcements, and turn

upon him and crush him, he stopped the pursuit, and turned to pay his respects to the tories who had made their escape.

There was a feeling of great uneasiness throughout the Santee district among the royalists. Many of their families were uncertain as to whether or not any of their male members had made themselves liable to punishment.

Those who did, dared not return to their homes. Some of them wandered off towards Charleston, and enlisted in the British army, whilst others remained concealed in the swamps till the end of the war.

Harry remained in the Santee district for several months, giving the patriots protection, and overawing the tories to such a degree that Tarleton sent a squadron of horse under one of his lieutenants to drive him out.

The gallant Sumter, hearing of his peril, came to his assistance, and together they boldly defied the red-coats.

For more than a week they rushed in and out of the swamps, striking the enemy here and there, until harassed, worn out, their numbers decimated, they were glad to retreat and leave "The Game Cock" and his gallant aide in peaceful possession of all the Santee section.

After the retreat of the enemy, Harry concluded to pay a visit to the Morgans and once more bask in the sunny smiles of the fair Jessie.

Within a half mile of Jessie's home, he met the old negro, Ben, whom the reader will remember had befriended him and his young mistress on the night that the young aide warned her to devise some means to prevent her father from attending the gathering of the tories at Ison's mill.

"Hallo, Ben," he said, greeting the old darkey, kindly.

"Afore de Lord! Massa Harry, is dat you?" exclaimed the old darkey, looking up in surprise.

"Yes, Ben, this is me. Are they all well up at the house?"

"Yes, sah! dem dat's dar, is."

"What do you mean! Ain't they all at home?"

"No, sah, dey ain't. Old Massa and Miss Jessie are done gone away."

"Gone! Where?"

"I dunno, sah, da went away wid de King's sodjers."

"Mr. Morgan and Miss Jessie, do you say?"

A terrible feeling of uneasiness was tugging at Harry Hinton's heart. He dreaded to hear more, but he questioned the old darkey and soon ascertained that the old tory had gone away with a detachment of British cavalry, carrying Jessie with him against her consent, as she was wringing her hands and shrieking like one in despair.

Mrs. Morgan was left behind to manage the farm and servants, while the daughter was to be placed in charge of the garrison at Charleston, if not sent out of the country altogether.

"Ben," he said to the old darkey, "here's a shilling for you. Don't tell any one that you have seen me—good-bye," and, throwing the shilling on the ground at the old negro's feet, he dashed away as fast as his horse could carry him.

Reaching the camp he told his story to General Sumter, and begged of him to pursue the British and rescue his sweetheart.

The brave old fighter could not refuse, and, just as the sun was sinking, they began the pursuit. His men were thorough night-riders, and all through the starlit night they rode, urged on by the impetuous spirit of the young aide.

Not dreaming of pursuit, the British Horse had rested all night, and, the next morning, just as they were about to mount, Sumter's men burst upon them like a thunderbolt.

A short, sharp, and decisive fight ensued, and in ten minutes the red-coats were sent flying.

Harry beheld his beloved struggling to get away from a couple of dragoons, who, at the command of her treacherous father, were trying to place her upon a horse.

With a shout he dashed forward, ran one of the dragoons through with his sword, and clasped Jessie to his heart. At the same moment the onward sweep of the patriots forced her father and the other dragoon to fly for their lives.

"Saved! saved!" cried Jessie, throwing her arms about his neck.

"And henceforth you are mine. I hope your father may escape."

He did escape, for the patriots were too tired from the long night ride to make any pursuit.

Harry introduced Jessie to the General and his staff, and asked for an escort of ten men to take her back home, which request the General promptly granted.

When he reached her home he sent for a minister, and within an hour after their return they were made man and wife, with the full and free consent of her mother.

At the expiration of a week Harry took leave of his young bride and rejoined his command.

He took part in nearly all the battles, and participated in the closing scenes of the war in South Carolina.

When he returned to his bride with a brilliant reputation as a brave, dashing officer, and settled down to the quiet life of a country farmer.

When Mr. Morgan returned, which he did some time after the close of the war, he found himself the grandfather of a bouncing little boy named Harry Sumter Hinton. He begged the forgiveness of the happy parents of the child, and received it, "because," as Harry said, "the war is over."

They both lived to a ripe old age, and Harry often recounted to his grandchildren on his knees, his exploits in the war of the Revolution, when he fought for Independence and a wife, as the famous SUMTER'S AIDE.

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